



LH-1: Falls Church History Room Collection Management Policy

Date Issued: 12/14/16

Date Revised: 12/9/21 DRAFT

Attachments: LH-1a FCHR Deed of Gift & Donation Form

1. Mission Statement

The mission of the Mary Riley Styles Public Library's Falls Church History Room (FCHR) is to collect, preserve, and promote materials with historical significance concerning all inhabitants, government, institutions, and environment of the City of Falls Church, notably including those people and places historically underrepresented. The goal of the collection is to preserve and maintain these materials in trust for future generations.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the care and development of the FCHR Collections. Collections care refers to the continuing evaluation of physical conditions and monitoring of the archival environment and housing of the collections. Collections will be evaluated for their continued relevance to the scope of the FCHR and will be developed to further capture the history of the people and places of the City of Falls Church.

3. Scope of Collections

FCHR Collections consist of documents, books, maps, sound recordings, and images in a variety of formats that support the study of Falls Church by citizens and researchers. These collections represent the social, cultural, political and economic history of Falls Church.

In addition to historical resources, FCHR collects relevant current records from City government and community organizations. (For more information, please see the [collection overview](#) on the library website.)

Where possible, collections are being digitized to provide ease of access and preservation relief to materials. FCHR plans to collect born digital materials in the near future and to that end is developing a born digital policy (meaning originally digital).

Staff will also endeavor – in accordance with the library’s diversity, equity, and inclusion goals - to expand collections of historically underrepresented areas and populations in Falls Church.

4. Collections Care

Collections care consists of three primary areas: preservation, safe handling and conservation.

A. Preservation

Preservation refers to measures taken to preserve the physical and digital life of collection materials. Such measures include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring that materials are housed in the best possible archival housing, such as acid free folders and boxes
- Maintaining the correct levels of ventilation and humidity in the room using monitors to prevent the presence of mold and/or mildew
- Making sure that bound materials are properly spaced on shelves so as to prevent damage from items leaning or overcrowding on shelves
- Removing potentially damaging fasteners such as paper clips and staples from paper materials
- Maintaining the proper light sources in the room to prevent damage from excessive exposure
- Creating digital preservation master files for posterity

B. Safe Handling

Safe handling refers to measures taken by staff and the public to reduce damage to materials viewed in the FCHR. Such measures include but are not limited to requiring that:

- All materials must be viewed within the FCHR
- Visitors must only view one item originating from one folder, box, etc. at a time to ensure materials are not misplaced
- Cloth gloves should be used when handling documents, photographs and other archival materials
- Only pencils should be used for note-taking purposes
- Digital preservation master files and copies should be created when possible, and used for research, to protect original materials from active use

C. Conservation

Conservation refers to efforts by staff to repair damaged materials and restore them to their original condition. Such measures include but are not limited to:

- Treating materials for mold
- Repairing tears and stabilizing paper materials
- Monitoring and treating audiovisual materials for vinegar syndrome
- Stabilizing bound materials with glue and in some cases re-binding

VI. Acquisitions and Donations

Donations will be accepted when they coincide with the FCHR mission and scope and must be related to one or more of the following:

- Materials that record the history or development of the land, homes, or buildings within the City of Falls Church
- Materials that record the history and contributions of individuals or families who resided in or served in the City of Falls Church
- Materials that preserve the histories of local clubs, organizations, schools, churches, businesses, and institutions of the City of Falls Church
- Materials that record the history of the community, including the social life and culture

The FCHR may accept materials related to one or more of the following if they directly pertain to the history and development of the City of Falls Church or communities adjacent to the City:

- History of the areas immediately surrounding the City of Falls Church
- History of the Commonwealth of Virginia with Falls Church specific content

Other criteria include:

- Relevance to the history of the City of Falls Church
- Uniqueness and historical value of the item
- Physical condition of the item
- Space constraints for storage of the item
- Time needed to arrange the collection for use
- Submission of a FCHR Deed of Gift & Donation Form

FCHR reserves the right to decline gift offers. Materials that do not fit within this policy will be referred to other local historical societies and/or collections.

Materials donated to the FCHR must be organized before donated to the library and donors must complete and sign the library's "FCHR Deed of Gift and Donation Form" transferring ownership of the materials to the library.

Terms of Donations:

- Donations are transferred irrevocably and absolutely to the Mary Riley Styles Public Library and will not be returned once donated.
 - If specific use restrictions are required, they must be negotiated in advance and approved separately in writing by the Mary Riley Styles Public Library Director.
- The Mary Riley Styles Public Library reserves the right to decide how and under what circumstances donated items will be retained, arranged, stored, preserved, described, cataloged, digitized, and exhibited.
- Any appraisal or establishment of any item's value for tax purposes is the responsibility of the donor and must be completed before the item is donated.
- In the event that the donor gives additional items to the library in the future, a separate "FCHR Deed of Gift & Donation Form" must be completed for the new items.

The Mary Riley Styles Public Library reserves the right to amend this policy and to rule on situations not specifically covered herein.

V. Deaccessioning

Materials deemed not to be in accordance with the FCHR mission and scope may be deaccessioned. Additionally, materials rarely used by the public and/or researchers may be deaccessioned. Staff will periodically conduct a collection review to determine the ongoing value of all collections housed in the FCHR. For materials where no deed of gift form exists, the library will make reasonable efforts to find the donor, but if no one is located within one year, the library will be deemed to be the sole owner of all rights to the materials.

VI. Access

Staff will make every effort to make FCHR Collections available to interested patrons and researchers.

- Visitors to the FCHR, as well as users via phone and email, will be registered for purposes of internal statistics and tracking research trends and collection usage.
- Collections materials should be indexed and records accessible in either the [public access catalog](#) or the [FCHR Digital Collection and Index](#). Finding aids also exist for many collections.
- Collections materials do not circulate.

- The FCHR maintains hours in which patrons can access the room, which will be staffed. Patrons are encouraged to check with staff beforehand so that staff can attempt to locate materials before the visit.
- On occasions where patrons are not able to visit the Local History Room, staff may conduct a reasonable amount of research on their behalf, time permitting.

Copies and scans will be performed only by MRSPL staff. FCHR does allow patrons to take photographs of printed materials (but not of photographic materials) with cameras or smartphones free of charge. Usage of all materials is subject to the following rights statement:

All reproductions from the Mary Riley Styles Public Local Library History Collection are by default for personal, one-time "fair use" in accordance with United States copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Generally, this permits libraries and archives to "furnish photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted works" for the purpose of "private study, scholarship, or research."

Reproductions from the FCHR Collection for any purpose other than personal "fair use" - such as publication (in any medium, including online posting), commercial display, or advertisement -- must be approved in writing by the Library Director or Adult Services Supervisor and must be attributed to "Mary Riley Styles Public Library, Falls Church History Collection, Falls Church, VA."

Irrespective of whether the Library Director or Adult Services Supervisors has approved use of the materials, and because the copyright of many materials in the FCHR Collection is not held by the library itself, the individual requesting any reproduction is solely responsible for ensuring that permission for use has been properly obtained from any copyright materials. Additionally, Mary Riley Styles Public Library reserves the right to refuse or limit reproduction of any item as required by donor agreement, law, or if reproduction could result in physical damage to the material.

VII. Policy and Procedure Review

Staff will review FCHR policies every three years or upon a major change to procedures precipitated by technological advances, staffing or other factors. Additionally, staff will keep apprised of best practices in the field and consider amending policy based on the recommendations of organizations like the Society of American Archivists in addition to local history collections of a similar size, scope and mission

See also:

ADM-15 Gifts and Donations
ADM-30 Collection Management